The above projects have already been completed. However, no project proposal has been prioritised for development of Vidarbha during 2006-07 nor has any such project proposal been received.

Promotion of coastal tourism

1605. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been conceived by Government to promote coastal monuments/tourist spots by introduction of domestic cruise shipping in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are Government's efforts to promote coastal tourism in this peninsula?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance for tourism infrastructure development of specified tourism projects including projects related to coastal monuments and tourist spots of States/ Union Territories and procurement of cruise vessels, boats etc. for promotion of cruise tourism. Ministry of Tourism has also given No Objection Certificate to two private operators to operate their cruise vessels for the purpose of cruise tourism promotion along the Indian coast.

In addition to above, a High Power Steering Group has been constituted to formulate Cruise Shipping policy for the country. On the recommendations of this Steering Group, a Wokring Group has been constituted by Department of Shipping for identification of Ports having cruise tourism facilities along the East and West Coast of India.